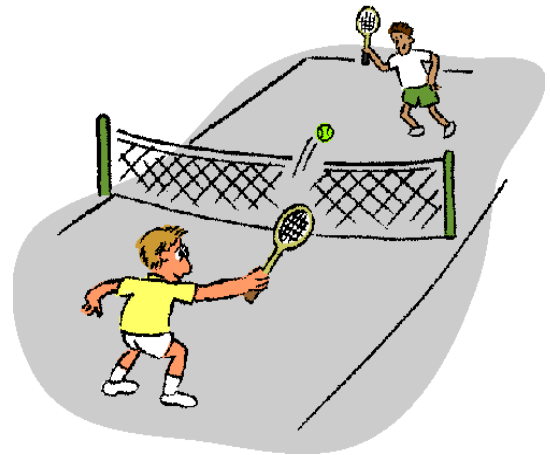


Disappointment

"I am sure I am going to win this competition," I thought **jovially** as I arrived at the competition venue. On a balmy morning, the Singapore Sports Centre was **festooned** with banners and it was **abuzz** with activity. As I entered the centre, I felt the tension in the air.

Just then, my tennis coach **strode over purposefully** to me. Almost instantaneously, he started giving me last minute advice and reminders. I was taking part in the tennis national competition. It was my fourth time taking part in it and I was confident that I would win again. I was already **envisioning** myself holding the trophy and imagined the four trophies displayed in my cabinet. Waving my coach away impatiently, I said **flippantly**, "I've won three times in a row already. I will definitely won again!" With an air of confidence, I **strutted** onto the tennis court and waited for the competition to begin.



It was my turn to serve. I tossed the ball up in the air and swung my racket. To my consternation, I missed. **Abashed**, I thought, "I am the winner! I shouldn't have made that mistake!" To make matters worse, I saw my opponent smirking and the crowd sniggering. With a steely gaze, I tried again and scored a point. Seeing the opponent's shocked expression, I became more complacent. Unfortunately for me, the opponent recovered and played his best. Eventually, I lost badly to the opponent with my opponent

winning all six sets. My opponent **sneered at me**, "Pride always comes before a fall, losert." Hearing the crowd **jeering at** me, I was **mortified** and fled the scene.

Crestfallen, I returned to my team. My coach was **apoplectic with fury** as he glared at me furiously **with his arms akimbo**. With my head bowed, I **said sullenly**, "It must have been a disappointment to both of us. I won't be getting this year's trophy after all."



Livid with anger, my coach **lambasted me**, "You are the biggest disappointment! You have the skill to win this competition and yet you didn't! Why? Because you were too complacent! You didn't even serve properly! Your opponent should have been easy to beat!" My coach **castigated** me for a full ten minutes and was out of breath. **Incensed**, he took a deep breath and bellowed, "You are such a disappointment! You will have to train harder!" Just like that, he stormed off in a huff. My coach's words made me

feel worse. I was **despondent**. As I sat down, I thought of the chance to win the trophy that I had complacently thrown away. It was such a disappointment that I felt as though I was in a bad dream.

On seeing that I was **down in the dumps**, my team mates swarmed over to cheer me up. "Turn your disappointment into determination. You can do it! There is still next year's competition. Just train harder for the next competition! We will support you!" one of my team mates encouraged me. Everyone else **chimed in** and **readily agreed to** support me. My spirits were lifted and I asked them hopefully, "Really?" They nodded their

heads vigorously. I could feel their energy and resolution seep into my veins. I said **robustly**, "I will train harder to win the next competition!"

In the next few months, I trained everyday and gave it my all. I listened attentively to my coach's advice during my training sessions. Whenever possible, my team mates would come to encourage me. Their presence never failed to spur me on.

Finally, the day arrived. I **thought grimly**, "Now I can prove to you that I am still the best." I strode onto the tennis court and **readied myself for** the match. Before long, the



match began. Throughout the match, I kept a steely gaze on the ball. After a few more matches, I made it to the finals. **Adrenaline coursed through my veins** as I stepped into the tennis court. It was a close fight. I managed to win by scoring two points more than my opponent. I was euphoric and was unable to believe my eyes and ears. I had won! My coach beamed and sang praises to me. My

team mates crowded over to me and thumped my back. They were laughing in delight while the spectators whooped and cheered. Needless to say, I was radiating happiness as I received the trophy.

I would never forget how I had lost the match due to my cocky attitude. Recalling the incident, I still **rued my complacency** then. As I sat thinking, I would always certainly remember the disappointment that would always serve as a valuable lesson to me.

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